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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/599,099	09/19/2006	Sven Prollius	59731US007	4063
32692	7590	01/09/2009	EXAMINER	
3M INNOVATIVE PROPERTIES COMPANY			SILBERMANN, JOANNE	
PO BOX 33427				
ST. PAUL, MN 55133-3427			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3611	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			01/09/2009	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

LegalUSDocketing@mmm.com
LegalDocketing@mmm.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/599,099	PROLLIUS ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Joanne Silbermann	3611	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 October 2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-8 and 11 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-8 and 11 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the prismatic elements facing the light source wherein the light source comprises a light guide and a light source (claim 1) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-6 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benson, US patent #5,122,902.

4. Benson teaches an assembly including a light source (Figure 5), plate 68 suitable for back illumination, retroreflective sheet 66. The retroreflective sheet includes prismatic elements having lateral faces and base edges (column 2 lines 51-64). Indicia 67 may be placed on the front face. Figure 4D shows the prismatic elements facing the back (backing layer 50). The light source may include a light guide (column 8 line 61 through column 9 line 2). As best as can be determined from the Drawings at this time, the light source of Benson would face the prismatic elements.

5. Benson does not specifically teach using the display as a license plate, however illuminated license plates are old and well known. It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to utilize license plate indicia on the display of Benson if it is desired to use the display on a vehicle.

6. Regarding claim 2, Benson does not specifically teach the method of forming the prismatic elements, however the method of forming the device is not germane to the patentability of the device itself. Therefore this limitation has not been given patentable weight.

7. Regarding claim 3, Benson teaches curved or flat surfaces (see Abstract).

8. Regarding claims 5 and 6, Benson teaches the indicia as being a layer of ink (such layer inherently then being a raised structure) which has reduced transparency (as seen from Figure 5).

9. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benson as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Tietze et al. DE 202 18 626 U1.

10. Benson does not specifically describe the retroreflective sheet as being adhered to a support (such as sheet 68) on a side opposite the prismatic elements, however this is shown by Tietze et al. Tietze et al. teach adhesive 16 (Figure 2) holding retroreflective sheet 15 to a support. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to utilize such adhesive in the assembly of Benson so as to provide a securely fastened laminate.

11. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Benson and Tietze et al. as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Fitzke et al. DE 102 47 708 A.

12. Benson and Tietze et al. do not teach embossing as a method of forming the indicia however this is well known in the art as shown by Fitzke et al. Fitzke et al. teach embossing as a method of forming a license plate [0022]. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to utilize such a method to form the plate of Benson since Fitzke et al. teach this method as being well known in the art.

Response to Arguments

13. Applicant's arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

14. A new reference has been applied in response to Applicant's amendments to claim 1.

Conclusion

15. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joanne Silbermann whose telephone number is 571-272-6653. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 5:30 - 2:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on 571-272-6651. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Joanne Silbermann
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3611

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Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3611